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MUHLENBERG COLLEGE.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE MINISTERIUM OF PENNSYLVANIA.

BY REV. T. L. SEIP, D.D.,
President of the College, Allentown, Pa.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

1887

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE MINISTERIUM OF PENNSYLVANIA

AT ITS

140TH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD IN ZION'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 2, 1887.

By Rev. T. L. SEIP, D.D.,
President of Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa.

WITH AN EDITORIAL FROM "THE LUTHERAN."

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

ALLENTOWN, PA., *June 28th*, 1887.

Pres. T. L. SEIP, D.D., Muhlenberg College.

Rev. and Dear Sir:—At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Trustees of Muhlenberg College, held on the 24th inst., we were appointed to request for publication a copy of your address on Muhlenberg College, delivered at the late convention of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. It is the concurrent judgment of the Committee that the circulation of the address through our congregations would promote the interest of the institution, and press its claims upon the attention of our people. Hoping that you will furnish us with a copy of the address at an early date, we are,

Very respectfully,

S. A. REPASS,
E. S. SHIMER,
C. J. COOPER,
} *Committee.*

ALLENTOWN, PA., *July 2d*, 1887.

Dear Brethren:—In answer to your note of the 28th ult., permit me to say, that my address was not prepared for publication; but, as you seem to think that its circulation would serve the cause of the Church and the College, which are so dear to us all, I will cheerfully furnish it. Praying that the Divine blessing may attend this effort to promote the interests of Christian education, I am, with sincere regard,

Yours in Christ,

T. L. SEIP.

REV. DR. S. A. REPASS,
HON. E. S. SHIMER,
REV. C. J. COOPER,
} *Committee.*

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE.

(*Editorial from the "Lutheran," June* 23, 1887.)

We are pleased that we have secured, and have been able to spread before the eyes of our people, and the friends of Christian education, the valuable reflections contained in the discourse of President Seip, prepared by the authority of the Synod of Pennsylvania, and delivered in the presence of its members and a large congregation, in Zion's Lutheran Church, Philadelphia.

It will not be possible in brief space to call attention at length to its remarkable and interesting statistics. Muhlenberg College in the twenty years of its existence has furnished fifty members for the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, who are successfully ministering to our churches in both languages, and has also many of her graduates laboring in theological and literary institutions and the Christian ministry in other places and parts of our land, as Augustana Seminary, Gustavus Adolphus College, Ohio, Western Pennsylvania, Canada, etc., and of her two hundred and twenty-four sons more than one half are engaged in this glorious and necessary work. Besides this, the remaining half have shown themselves useful as physicians, legislators, lawyers, and in other honorable pursuits. Such an interesting record has she made during the first twenty years of her honorable existence, for which we should "thank God and take courage." This thought deserves special emphasis when we ask, in connection with it, what would be the condition of things in the Ministerium, and in other fields, if the College had not been founded?

There is a second thought, which was impressed with much force upon us at the meeting of the Synod, and since, in connection with the strenuous efforts made to secure money for the erection of the new seminary buildings at Mount Airy. What hope would there be of securing the College *now*, if arrangements had not been made with wise foresight, in advance of the present condition of things, to furnish the Church with a suitable place for the education of her sons? We give expression to this thought here because the former trustees and friends of the College have often been severely censured for acquiring the property and erecting the valuable buildings they now possess for the Synod. They did no more than the directors and friends of the seminary are doing now; and it is well that they did so. Necessity compelled them to it; we rejoice now greatly that it was done, and we ought not to forget the circumstances which occasioned the debt, and what prevented it from being at once liquidated. It was absolutely necessary at the time the College was started, when it was to enter into competition with old, long-established collegiate institutions around and near to it, such as Pennsylvania, Dickinson, Franklin and Marshall, Lehigh and Lafayette, to have such accommodations for the students which, even though not equally attractive, might not be repulsive to them. This was accomplished at a comparatively moderate cost, and if the original expectations and promises had been carried out and fulfilled, there would have been no debt. The brethren of the present generation ought to know, and those of the past remember, that during the jubilee year, 1867, $50,000 of the $100,000 expected to be raised were to be given to the College. One hundred thousand dollars, minus a small fraction, were raised, but the share of the College was directed to local objects. The debt therefore remained; and the trustees and friends were left to work out the problem for themselves. This they endeavored to do, and let it be kept in mind that the College lived through all these "troublous times," still lives; and will, by the blessing of God, continue to do so. Sometimes brethren speak as if the money had been spent for nothing. It was not. The debt was incurred by necessity, to keep the substantial possessions they had acquired.

In this period, hundreds of gentlemen of Allentown and the neighborhood were induced, by the persistent labors "from house to house" of the trustees and friends of the College, to relinquish their individual shares of stock for the benefit of the institution, without any equivalent; and thus a start of many thousands was successfully made. By other labors, loans, temporary and permanent, they secured for the Church, the Synod of Pennsylvania, sufficient buildings for all their purposes, including two excellent residences for the president and one of the professors, now in most excellent condition, through the efficient labors of the present head of the institution, the financial agent and other friends; some five acres of ground in the central part of the beautiful city of Allentown, continually increasing in value; an endowment of $120,000, equal to that of Pennsylvania College after almost three times as long an existence; educational furniture, apparatus, library, etc. Thus it is seen the debt has not been for naught; nor have any of the means been squandered in excessive salaries or unnecessary conveniences, but all for what is solid and permanent. Let all this remarkable condition of things be remembered as an offset to the unreasonable complaints, and thanks offered to God on this behalf.

One last thought. A grand future is before us, but we must not relax our exertions, but continue to do our duty to the College, the nursery of the Church and the Seminary. The Synod has authorized and given its sanction to a plan by which this worthy institution can and ought to be freed from its still remaining burdens. It needs additional support, just like the oldest colleges and universities of our land. In the month of October ensuing, an opportunity will be given to our churches and people to contribute for the complete endowment of the *German Professorship* in the College. This ought to be done at the very least. We ought not to forget that Christian schools and colleges, Christian theological seminaries in connection with or as aids to the Christian Church, are the only hope of our land and the world. Let the example of New England stimulate the children of the mother Church of the Reformation. Millions have been and are now being given for institutions of this character, and so general is the habit of giving in that part of our country,

that it has been said that an individual cannot die with an easy conscience unless he has left some of his substance to the literary and religious Christian schools by which he and his fellow-citizens have been educated. Those gifts will not be lost; those given to Harvard two hundred and fifty years since still continue to diffuse blessings to society. Let us give, rich and poor, each according to his ability, whilst we live as well as when we die, to the cause of Christ and his holy religion. It will be amply repaid in time and eternity.

ADDRESS.

The subject which was assigned us for this occasion, and on which we propose to address you briefly, is

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE.

It is fitting that our College, which was named in honor of the patriarch Muhlenberg, should receive special consideration at this meeting of the Ministerium, at which centennial services, in commemoration of that distinguished servant of God and founder of our Church in this country, are to be held.

It is fitting and in harmony with this celebration, that we should speak of Muhlenberg College in this congregation, and in this city, in which Muhlenberg labored so faithfully and efficiently, and with whose history his name is so honorably and indissolubly connected. It is also fitting because of the vital relation of the College, as the training-school of the Synod, to our Theological Seminary; because of its growing importance to the work of furnishing an adequate supply of trained ministers for our own pulpits and for the mission field, and of an educated laity for our congregations; in short, because of its importance as the educational foundation on which our church work in every department will largely rest in the future. If this be so, let us remark, in passing, how necessary it is to the future prosperity of the Church entrusted to our care, that this foundation

be made deep and broad, that it be strengthened in every possible way by all the means at our command for this purpose.

In presenting this subject we propose to discuss two points, 1. The importance of the College to the work of the Church, and 2. The duty of the Church to the College.

We need not enter into a lengthy argument in this presence to show the importance and necessity of an educated ministry for the Church, of men thoroughly furnished for the work, of able ministers of the New Testament. A body of divines distinguished by the name and teaching of Luther, whose church, from the time of the "Preceptor of Germany" until now, has shone with the lustre of the brightest names renowned for sacred learning, surely appreciates the importance of an educated ministry. The history of the Reformation, our own incomparable symbolical books, especially the great Apology of the Augsburg Confession, from the pen of that phenomenal scholar, Melanchthon, all show with what signal effect the weapon of sanctified learning may be wielded. The labors and productions of Lutheran scholars in every department of learning, sacred and profane, from the Reformation period until the present day, form an invincible proof of the importance which our church has ever attached to education and learning.

The Lutheran Church has always been distinguished as the church of theologians and scholars, and if we remain true to her spirit and character, we will not only endeavor to maintain this distinction, but will show our appreciation of the need of an educated ministry by putting forth every possible effort to furnish it. When we consider the need of an educated ministry in the light of our past history, and of the growing demands now pressing upon us, and of the possibilities of the future, the importance of the College to the interests of the Church must be very evident. For how are we to furnish an educated ministry without the institutions, which are necessary to educate it? Where are our young men to be educated and their characters formed in harmony with the spirit and faith of our Church; where are we to give them their preparatory training for admission to our Theological Seminary, if not in a college of our own, established and sustained by the Church, on our own territory?

We need not dwell on the great demand for laborers at home and abroad, to prosecute the work of home and foreign missions. This subject will be presented by others at the proper time. But you will permit me to remark that the field open to faithful ministers of our own Church is almost unlimited, and ought to be more rapidly occupied and worked than it is possible for us to do with our present supply, even if the means for their support were already at hand. A constantly-increasing supply of properly equipped men will be needed to take the places of ministers who are rapidly passing away, or becoming superannuated, or otherwise disabled. The proportion of such will be greater annually as the list of ministers becomes larger with the growth of our Church in new fields. If we look over our own Ministerium, we see the grave-yard bloom on many a brow, and very soon the places that now know many of our number will know them no more. How is this increasing demand for laborers at home and abroad to be supplied? How are the growing annual losses to be made up except by the agency of our training-schools for the ministry, by giving greater attention and support to the educational work of the Church, by securing the right kind of students for the College and Seminary?

St. Paul tells us that, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. 1: 21. The same Apostle says, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" Rom. 10: 14, 15. And we may add, How shall they be sent except they be properly educated and equipped for the work? From every point of view the College lies at the foundation of our entire church work. But the importance of the College to the work of the Church appears not only in the preparatory training of young men for the ministry, but also in the very significant matter of educating laymen for usefulness in our congregations. This part of the work of the College is not always remembered and valued as it should be.

Our congregations everywhere need the services of intelligent laymen, educated in accordance with the faith, the usages and the spirit of our own Church, in our own schools and colleges. The

congregations need laymen of liberal training, who are thoroughly acquainted with the various interests and operations of the Church outside their own localities, and have an intelligent conception of church work and of the great mission which the Lord has given our Church to perform, especially in this broad land. Laymen with such training and qualifications are needed to influence their fellow-members, and to assist and sustain their pastors, in their efforts to promote the various interests and enterprises of the Church. Such men are needed as teachers and officers in our Sunday-schools, and as advocates of every good work in the public meetings of the congregations. They are needed to represent our Church as she deserves to be represented in the community of laymen at large, in the daily intercourse, not only of those in the learned professions, but also in social and business circles. Educated laymen are needed also to counsel and co-operate with the active members of the Church, who have not had the benefit of a liberal training, but are important and useful in the work of the Church according as they faithfully employ the talents with which the Lord has entrusted them. The Church needs and cherishes zealous, godly men of whatever degree of learning or education they may be; but, other things being equal, skilled laborers, laymen with a liberal training in harmony with the teachings of our most holy faith, will be more serviceable in Church work than if they were not thus specially prepared for it. It is of no slight advantage and importance to the Church and her membership also to have her representatives in the professions of medicine, law and teaching. How great a boon it would be to our people in times of sickness, to be able to call to their bedside Christian physicians, of their own household of faith, to minister, not only to their sick bodies, but, it may be, to "minds diseased"! What a blessed calling is that of the Christian physician, who, in imitation of his Divine Master, not only heals the diseased body, but ministers to the sick soul. Such physicians would be a blessing to every congregation. The same is true to a large extent of the other professions. God-fearing, Christian lawyers are greatly needed to defend the rights of the wronged, to secure justice for the oppressed, to protect the innocent from wrong-doers; in short, to conserve the

rights of their fellow-men. We need not dwell at length on the importance of having faithful, Christian teachers. The good they can do for the Church and the world is incalculable. They have the power largely to mould the character of Church and State for the future, by the influence they may exert on the youth entrusted to their care. The youthful mind is plastic. It can be moulded and fashioned almost at will. How essential to the well-being of society that it should be formed aright. The conscientious, Christian teacher is careful of the influence which he exerts on those committed to his charge, and, like the Divine Teacher, instructs his pupils in that wisdom which maketh wise unto salvation. Such teachers are often the most efficient helps of our pastors in their work. They are among our most active and useful members as Sunday-school superintendents and officers, and are in every way a blessing to the congregation. The importance, therefore, of having well-trained laymen as well as educated ministers as skilled laborers cannot be over-estimated, and should elicit our most earnest efforts to secure them.

The importance of the College to the work of the Church is shown also by what it *has already accomplished* in the education of young men for the ministry and for usefulness as laymen in our congregations. Of the 224 graduates of the College, 92 have already entered the ministry, and about 30 have been preparing for it in our Theological Seminary during the term that has just closed. Several, who were members of other communions, have pursued theological studies elsewhere. Thus out of 224 alumni, 122, or over half, have devoted themselves to the holy ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If you examine the list of this body, you will find that over 50 of the members of this Ministerium, as given in the minutes of 1886, were educated in Muhlenberg College, a very respectable percentage of the Synod.

Although the College is not quite twenty years old, and most of her graduates are still young men, scarcely any having reached middle age, yet a goodly number have already distinguished themselves as professors in theological and literary institutions; as pastors of most important charges and congregations; as superintend-

ents and teachers in our public schools; as editors and writers for the religious and secular press; as laymen prominent in the profession of their choice, some even having won honorable names and titles in public life. Others are useful lay members in our congregations, blessing themselves and their fellow-men, by reason of the liberal Christian training which they received in the formative period of their lives in Muhlenberg College.

Thus the importance of the College to the work of the Church appears when we consider what it has done, as the preparatory school for our Theological Seminary, in the education of young men for the ministry, and for usefulness in the Church also as laymen.

Its importance is very evident, even to the natural vision, when we see how rapidly the losses in our own Ministerium are made up, and the gains increased by the graduates of the College, to say nothing of the excellent men whom it has furnished to the Western institutions, and other synods of the General Council. We think we remain within the bounds of modesty when we claim that the College has done a great work for the Church, during the short time of its existence, in comparison with the limited means, which have thus far been received directly from the Church. Much more, doubtless, would have been accomplished if the educational work of the Church had received the attention and support which it deserved. But we thank God for the good that the College has been permitted to do in the past, though under great discouragements, and we trust in Him for the future.

2. The duty of the Church to the College will appear from the following considerations:

Muhlenberg College is the college of this Ministerium, owned and controlled by it through its own chosen representatives. It occupies exactly the same confessional position with it. All the members of its faculty, without exception, are members in regular standing with this Ministerium, or of congregations in connection with it. They believe, and are under solemn obligations to teach, the truth of the Old and New Testaments as confessed in the symbols of our Church. The distinctive position occupied by the institution as the College of

this Synod excludes it very largely from the active sympathy and support of those who are not of our Church, and the fact that it is not a secular or State institution deprives it of public aid. Under these conditions and circumstances the duty of the Church to sustain her own College is all the more imperative. This duty not only grows out of the relations, which the Synod sustains to the College, but arises also from the importance of the College to the work of the Synod and Church, as already shown. As the work of the Church in every department depends on the supply of trained laborers, the College is the foundation of it all, and hence the duty of the Church to the College is of prime importance. This will appear when you consider the fact that nearly one-half of the students in our Theological Seminary, during the past year, were graduates of Muhlenberg College. Of the present class of young men, just graduated by the Seminary, fifteen out of the nineteen are graduates of Muhlenberg College.

The duty and wisdom of the Church in providing and liberally sustaining a college in which her own lay membership may be furnished a higher Christian education in accord with her own faith and usages will hardly be questioned. We will not take the time to enlarge upon this point, and show the losses we have suffered in the past from want of proper attention to this matter. Let us be wiser in the future, and by all proper means endeavor to avoid a repetition of such losses. This can only be done by hearty sympathy and active co-operation on the part of all that are interested in the work of the Church. The trustees and authorities of the College, placed in trust and charge of its interests by your own choice, can accomplish little without your constant and active sympathy and support. They look to the pastors and congregations for students and aid, for kind words of encouragement and generous deeds of liberality. A word fitly spoken in the catechetical class, or in pastoral visitation, will often leave an impression that will result in pious youth devoting themselves to the holy ministry, or in faithful Christians setting apart a portion of their worldly goods to the use of our educational institutions, the College and the Seminary. This Ministerium, with over 200 ministers and more than 400 congrega-

tions, ought to have her institutions so well equipped in every respect and so full of students that they would be second to none in the land. To reach this goal in the near future should be the laudable object of our earnest endeavor.

Surely so great a Synod should have more than eleven beneficiary students in its own College. You will, perhaps, be surprised to learn that the present graduating class in Muhlenberg College does not contain one student supported by this body, although half its members will study for the ministry. The largest class in the College, the Freshman class, has but one beneficiary supported by our Synod, the remaining ten beneficiaries being divided between the Junior and Sophomore classes. Surely this is not as it should be, or might be, if a little more thought and attention were devoted to this subject by those who are in a position to do so. There are certainly more than eleven young men within the bounds of this Ministerium who are unable to educate themselves, but who would be eminently worthy to receive a training for the ministry at the hands of the Church.

Many of our largest and most influential congregations and pastoral charges have not one representative in the College, either as a student for the ministry, or as a lay member. Of the 124 students in the College during the present scholastic year, only a few are from the largest cities and towns within our bounds, with their thousands of Lutheran population. We do not mention this with the intention of reflecting on any one, for we have no such purpose or spirit, but merely to show the extent of our material, and what might and ought to be done to increase the usefulness and success of the College in the work of the Church. It also suggests the question, which we will not now discuss, as to the future effect upon our church, if this vast material remains uneducated, or is trained in other institutions that are alien to our faith and usages.

The cost of education in Muhlenberg College is certainly very low in comparison with what our people pay in other institutions outside our Church. As to the standard maintained in our course of instruction, we need but refer to the fact that our students have been received without examination, *ad eundem*, into the Sophomore,

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Junior and Senior classes of older and larger institutions of acknowledged standing throughout the country, and have been graduated from them with honor. We could name the students and the colleges, if it were necessary to do so.

Our graduates, we are informed, maintain excellent grade, in some instances, the first rank, side by side with the graduates of conspicuous and venerable institutions of learning. There seems to be just cause, therefore, why our Lutheran people should not always depreciate whatever belongs to their own Church, as they are so apt to do, but should discharge the duty which they owe to their own College, and to the faith in which they and their children have been baptized. So great a body as the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, with its round 100,000 members, should certainly be able and willing to furnish its College and Seminary with the most perfect equipments of every kind, and its activities and energies should be organized and directed to this end as the first and most important object claiming its attention.

What we need to accomplish this is an unselfish spirit and interest in the work of the Church, greater unity and harmony of co-operation, with intelligent organization and well-directed effort. If we love the Lord Jesus and His Church as we ought; if we appreciate the great need of more laborers to gather in the ripening harvest in His vineyard; if we realize our duty as we should, we will labor and pray earnestly, unitedly and persistently, until by the blessing of God our College and Seminary attain a usefulness and magnitude commensurate with the important work and interests of this historic and venerable Ministerium. May the Divine blessing rest upon all our efforts to promote the cause of Christian education. May God bless the College and the Seminary. Amen.